



Deeping St. James

Issue No.291 December 2025

The Deepings u3a **NEWSLETTER**

Website: deepings.u3asite.uk

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Market Deeping

Welcome

New members in November: Hazel Pullen, Deeping St James, Sonia McMorland, Market Deeping, Nigel and Sylvia Coke Woods, Market Deeping, Mark Walker, Bourne

NEXT MEETING: 15 December

Unless otherwise stated, all monthly meetings are at the Methodist Church, Deeping St James. Doors open at 9.30am.

PROGRAMME OF SPEAKERS FOR 2025/26:

15 December: Christmas

Tea/coffee and mince pies will be served and we will be entertained by the Buckden Bellringers

19 January 2026: Typewriter tales

A brief history of typewriters. Tales of disasters, love, wartime machines, drugs, espionage, bankruptcy and more.

16 February 2026: Lincolnshire Emergency Blood Bikes Service

It's not just bikes and it's not just blood! Find out what this charity actually does.:

MARGARET'S MUSINGS

Dear members

As we approach Christmas and the end of 2025, I thank you all for your support, in so many different ways, of the activities of The Deepings u3a.

We look forward to seeing you at our Christmas meeting on 15th December. On this special occasion there will be no entry charge (but please register your name, as usual, as you come in) and no ticket is required.

Join us to enjoy a mince pie with your coffee or tea, followed by festive entertainment from Buckden Bellringers. Finally, it's over to you for a rousing chorus of carol singing.

Good wishes to you all at this Christmas season.

Margaret

Chair, The Deepings u3a

CYCLING GROUP

Thursday 13TH November was the day for our monthly ride and four of us set off on a dry but windy morning from the Bridge in Market Deeping.

We travelled along Church Street, Halfleet and Peterborough Road to the A15 roundabout. From here we continued to Langtoft and turned onto West End and via Stowe Road to King Street.

At King Street, we turned left and headed for West Deeping, staying on King Street all the way through the road closure works and across the two level crossings onto the B1443 and then Ginton Road into Helpston.



After passing through Helpston and again negotiating the level crossing we turned onto Main Road into Etton. Through Etton we took the pathway to the tunnels (three of them, had only ever noticed two!) that go under the A15 where we took our photo.

At the A15 we turned towards Northborough and via Lincoln Road back to Market Deeping where we had a good lunch in the Stage.

A dry but blowy 12.5-mile ride that was reasonably pleasant.

Unfortunately, this was one of our long-time member's last ride, and we wish him all the best and thank him for his support and friendship over the years.

Our next ride will be at 10:30 on 11th December.

Report by Group Leader: Jim Torrance

MONDAY WALKING GROUP



Sixteen walkers met at The Granary, Orton on a wet drizzly day. There was a lot of wet gear worn in preparation for a damp walk. The walk was led by Brian (Ribs) Thornthwaite and was approximately 6.5 miles. Needless to say, there was plenty of mud and slippery conditions. We went towards the cafe, boating lake and veered off the track leading to the railway crossing. Crossed the River Nene to the ridge leading to Milton Ferry bridge. Following the river partly along the Boardwalk and more muddy paths to The Staunch. Here we were lucky to see a Kingfisher. Over the lock and along the track to the path going south of the river.

We then did a loop back to the cafe area and returned to the pub.

Amazingly it didn't rain too much so being suitably attired we were ok apart from mud.

A good meal was had by all and we were joined by Linda Perkins.

Best wishes to Helen Driscoll for a speedy recovery from a muddy accident.

Sadly, Yvonne Bather and Brian Thornthwaite are dropping out of the group and they will be missed.

I still have three slots to fill for the 2026 program of walk leaders, 1st June, 7th September and 7th December. If you are available, please let me know.

Wishing you all a Merry Xmas and a happy New Year 2026. Thank you for your support during 2025, it's a great group to lead.

Our next walk will be January 5th from Deeping Stage – details to follow, but expect Mud, Mud and more Mud.



**Report by Steve Hanson
Group Leader: Steve Hanson**

LISTENING TO MUSIC GROUP

Our November meeting took place at Wall's house. Colin had devised a different and imaginative format for the morning's listening entitled "How well do you know your Instruments". We were played short extracts of music in which we were asked to identify the solo instruments involved. Colin only revealed the answers after each track had finished.

Starting with the famous clarinet solo at the start of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, this was followed by unusual contributions featuring the Post Horn, Viola d'amore, Glockenspiel, Glass Harmonica and the Theremin. Oriental instruments included the Guzheng and a realistic rendition of *Horse Racing* on the Chinese Erhu.

An interesting variation of a piano was the Pedal Piano with music written specially for the instrument by Schumann.

Amongst other unusual instruments heard were the zither, cor anglais, contra bassoon, valve trombone, the Flugel Horn and the euphonium.

The morning finished with a dazzling performance of the violin virtuoso piece *Czardas* played on a tuba. Well done Colin for such an interesting and different programme. It certainly kept our little grey cells occupied.

Our next meeting is scheduled to be at Terry Noble's house – 10am on 10th December.

Report by Terry Noble
Group Leader: Terry Noble

THURSDAY WALKING GROUP



In November, 12 walkers met at the Six Bells at Witham-on-the-Hill on a beautiful, still morning with clear blue sky and no rain forecast.

Crossing over the road, from the pub, we took a hidden pathway between houses and headed due south. Climbing over a slippery stile we entered fields and unsurprisingly they consisted of very sticky mud. Our feet became heavier and we gained a few centimetres in



height, but we merrily persevered and eventually came upon the village of Carby. Walking towards the church, on asphalt now, we took a path with a gentle slope downwards besides two tall hedgerows. At the bottom, we crossed over the West Glen River on a newly constructed wooden bridge.

Heading still south we crossed more fields, made of mud. Upon reaching Broadholme Farm we took a minor, asphalt road, to enter the village of Essendine and continued up to the main road. This was the turning point for our journey back.

Heading through a modern housing estate we walked close to Manor Farm, then, after crossing a couple of fields, our journey back was on the out bound tracks, upon the sticky mud.

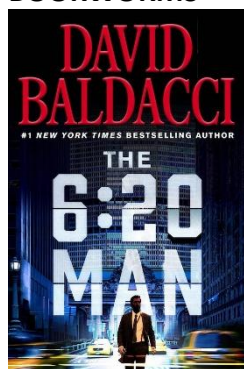
An excellent six-mile walk made taxing by the problems muddy boots cause. Surprisingly, apart from sheep, we did not see any wildlife, at all.

We were treated to a lovely meal, the majority of us having 14 inch pizzas. Several walkers were over-faced and had to ask for boxes to take home – these were willingly provided for them. I wonder what they will be having for evening meal?

Thank you to Helen and Brian Driscoll for arranging the day.

Report by Richard Coulson – Walk Leader

BOOKWORMS



'The 6:20 Man' by David Baldacci is an exciting and fast-paced American thriller, the first in a series of books featuring Travis Devine. Retiring at 32 years old from the army (under suspicious circumstances) the combat trained and lethal Devine reinvents himself. He becomes an entry-level analyst in a highly-regarded financial firm in Manhattan, commuting to his work from the house he shares with three others, on the daily 6.20am train. But Devine's old life swiftly returns when a close colleague is found hanged on the firm's premises; other deaths follow swiftly. Devine investigates in this well-paced thriller. But is money and power and the unethical motives of the super-rich behind the killings, or is there a more personal motive?

Most agreed that this was a good read – lots happening, some well-drawn and interesting characters, and a well-developed murder plot. But there were reservations. Some found little sympathy with and for the complex main character who oscillated between sympathy for others, but through his army training could transform into an unemotional killing machine.

Discussions then revolved around two issues. First, a theme that runs through this author’s many thrillers: hatred of those who seek limitless power and money at the expense of the many – a growing global problem. This major theme was never resolved satisfactorily in the novel. Second, that American thrillers are often more violent than British detective fiction. Bookworms at the meeting preferred the latter! But a fast-moving and exciting thriller – one Bookworm has already ordered the second book of the series. A final thought. At 550 pages, a huge book, weighing tons. Let’s hope the next novel is a slim one!

Report and Group Leader: Tom Baldwin

ART APPRECIATION GROUP

We had a different form of Art Appreciation this month. Chris Porsz showed us a collection of his photographs taken from the 1970s until the present time.

He began by telling us about his early life and that of his parents and grandparents who lived in Poland before the second world war and who suffered as a result, ending their lives in the hands of the occupying army. It was a very sad story.



This is Chris on Breakfast TV.

Chris’s parents came to Britain and made Peterborough their home.

Dad had arrived in Britain before the war started and he was able to fight for the British army.

His mother lived to be 90 which was a great achievement as she had been in a concentration camp as a young girl.



This is one of The Reunion photos. Below you can see the

updated version!

The photographs we saw paid a lot of attention to people and they were amusing. The now and then, made us smile. The years can be cruel or kind and some of the youngsters in the early photographs had sadly passed away before their time.

Chris did a project around The Reunion.



He had located characters from photos taken years ago and got them into the same pose as the original photo. There were some great hairstyles back in the day!

Girl meets Boy?



The policeman now looks younger than the boy on the bike!

It was a trip down memory lane for us all. Part of Chris’s fee went towards a Breast Cancer charity in memory of his late wife.

Our next meeting is in January 2026 when we will have our social get together. In the meantime, we wish you all a very happy Christmas and a healthy 2026.



Thank you to everyone who has contributed and supported the group again this year. A big thank you goes to David without whom we will struggle to provide such an interesting programme. His technical expertise and calmness when things go wrong are a credit to him!

Report and Group Leader: Sandra Jones

WEDNESDAY GARDENING GROUP

Twelve members of the Wednesday Gardening Group met at Waterside to discuss the Christmas Lunch in January as well as the programme for next year.

It was agreed that Jane would book The Horseshoe at Thurlby for 14th January, 2026. It would be helpful if everyone could look at the menu before our December meeting so that we can confirm numbers and pre-orders before Christmas. As usual, husbands are welcome.

Despite difficulties in hearing (!), the programme for 2026 was discussed. Venues etc can be confirmed at Jane's on 10th December. Members will, of course, receive an email ahead of 10th December but the meeting will take the normal form where everyone can make Christmas arrangements, wreaths etc so please bring what you will need!

Report: Jane Cooke

Group Leaders: Jean Foster/Jane Cooke

PACERS GROUP



Nine Pacers got off to a prompt start from The Feathers pub in Castor on a very mild and dry morning, perfect for a walk.

Geoff led us down to the Nene Way via Splash Lane and we followed the river and backwater, eventually crossing the meadow to Waternewton Mill where we paused to enjoy the splendid view.

Anne took the opportunity to take our group photo.

Leaving the Mill we followed the river, across the meadow and over a new wooden bridge as far as the weir. After crossing a second bridge, we returned along the Nene way, back to the end of Station Road.

After carefully crossing the railway line, we took the wooden

gate into Normangate field. The path goes diagonally through this field to the end of Port Lane. This conveniently brings us out in the village opposite the Feathers pub for lunch. Our walk was just over four miles but we all agreed that on this beautiful morning with all of the autumnal colours around us, it had the 'feel good' factor.

The pub staff were very friendly and efficient and we all enjoyed our lunch.

Report by Julie Fitzjohn

Group Leaders: Geoff Whittle and Margaret Beardshaw

POETS AND THEIR POETRY

On a chilly but bright afternoon we met for our December meeting, with our theme appropriately named "Christmas". We welcomed a new member to our group Chris.

Our first poem was *Sonnet in the Shape of a Potted Christmas Tree* by George Starbuck. Next *Truce* by Paul Muldoon. *The Journey of the Magi* by T. S. Eliot, was next. The atmospheric *Going For Water* by Robert Frost was our next offering. Something a bit different, *Signs of the Times* by Paul Laurence Dunbar, a Thanksgiving poem. We had several poems by Wendy Cope. A couple of poems by Brian Bilston. Then by Ella Wheeler Wilcox, *Christmas Fancies*. A most enjoyable afternoon kindly hosted by Juliet.

The Good Old Days by Brian Bilston

Pity the poor children
Of today, with their calendars
stuffed with chocolates,
never to know the thrill
of opening a small cardboard door
and discovering behind it
a picture of a bell.

Report and Group Leader: Susanne Hoadley

HISTORY GROUP

This month's talk was about The Spitfire and the Speaker was Shelagh Coates



This is a photograph of Warrant Officer John Henry (Harry) Coates He was Shelagh's uncle and a 24 year old pilot from York. He had volunteered for the RAF despite his work as a railway draughtsman which was a reserved occupation. He died on March 5th 1945. His plane crashed while on a mission to target German barges on a canal. His plane crashed, following anti-aircraft fire near the village of Cavarzere, in Northern Italy.

The wreckage of his plane was rediscovered by the Italian organisation of aviation archaeologists called Romagna Air Finders. The aircraft's number PT410 was matches to Warrant Officer Coat's

records. DNA samples extracted from the remains were matched to his niece (Shelagh) and a formal identification was made. To the right is a photo of the coffin being borne to his final resting place in the Commonwealth Graves Commission in Padua's War Cemetery.



Shelagh brought artefacts to the meeting which included a memorial plate, a wooden shield that holds part of the thin metallic fabric of the plane and the flags that were used at the funeral.

It was moving talk, interspersed with music. For those of us who have grandchildren, it was a fitting reminder of the horrors of war.

In December (17th) we will be in the Sports and Social Club for the Christmas buffet. Thank you to everyone who helped again this year. 2025 seems to have passed extremely quickly!

January's speaker is Philippa Massey and she will be talking about Stamford Low Life.

**Report by Sandra Jones
Group Leader: Sandra Jones**

STROLLERS GROUP

Since our last newsletter report in the October edition, we have had two walks, both of which, were well attended.

Our outing in October took us to Helpston, starting from The Bluebell. Taking a gentle stroll out of the village towards Barnack on an overcast morning, we then branched off left for a short distance, before reaching Broad Wheel Road.

Turning back on ourselves we re-entered the village, turning right into Wood Gate, which leads to Helpston Heath. After a short distance, we traversed a footpath towards Rice Wood.

Returning through the wood, we went along a footpath towards the main street, before taking a circular route past the church and the former Exeter Arms, with a brief stop at the war memorial and back to the start, beating the rain forecasted for later in the day.



Last month, we set off in late autumn sunshine from the Five Bells at Morton, heading along the attractive village street towards the A15. Crossing this main road, we continued to Hanthorpe, for a walk along the streets of this hamlet.

In this village we were bemused by a plaque on the wall of a cottage, which proclaimed that on a certain day in 1783, 'Nothing Happened Here'!

This walk was shorter than the usual for our group, as upon returning to the Five Bells we had a planning meeting to discuss amongst other things, a proposed annual lunch and the programme of walks for 2026, followed by lunch. The photograph shows the group ready for their lunch, after which

we left – just as it started to rain.

Overall, another successful year for the strolls, with yet again, no postponements and a full programme arranged for next year.

Report by Group Leader: Bob Deller

NATURAL HISTORY GROUP



The advantage of our November meeting at Ferry Meadows was that the paths are accessible for members of our group who use motorised scooters or rollators.

There is always plenty of wildlife here and we noticed the birds displaying their winter plumage. The heads of the black-headed gulls had turned to white. As well as many water birds, a treecreeper was spotted. This bird flies to the bottom of a tree trunk and makes its way upwards looking for food.

This was our last meeting of 2025 so we planned our 2026 programme whilst enjoying hot drinks and cakes in the cafe. We

were pleased to welcome two new members to the group this year.

**Report: Beverley Tagala
Group Leader: Beverley Tegala**

THURSDAY GARDENING GROUP



On the first Thursday morning in December, 14 members of the Thursday Gardening Group enjoyed a splendid three-course Christmas lunch in the warm and festively decorated dining room of Browning Court, Bourne. Everyone really enjoyed their delicious meals and were very appreciative of the efforts of the



staff who went to a lot of trouble to make it such a successful occasion.

The Thursday gardeners would like to extend warm wishes to other Deeping u3a members for a peaceful Christmas and health and happiness in 2026.

The next meeting of our group is scheduled for 5th February 2026.

**Photo: David Scott
Group Leaders: Kay Parker and Ann Pettit**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS
2025/26**

#

Chair	Margaret Beardshaw
Secretary	Mary Martin
Treasurer	Stuart Wilson
Membership Secretary	David Perkins
Group Co-ordinator	Tom Baldwin
Gift Aid Secretary	Anne Burton
Committee Member(s)	Phil Jones

**Non-Committee/Supporting
roles**

Speaker Arrangers	Gill Godden
	Lynn Ayres
Newsletter Editors	Sandra Jones
	Ruth Griffiths
Newsletter Distribution	David Scott
Newsletter Distribution	Liz Noble
Coordinator	
Webmaster	David Perkins
Media Equipment Co-ordinator/Asst. Webmaster	David Scott

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